

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, UR, US

SUBJECT: RABBI SCHNEIER'S CONVERSATIONS WITH THE COUNCIL FOR
RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

1. RABBI ARTHUR SCHNEIER, VISITING MOSCOW AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE APPEAL OF CONSCIENCE FOUNDATION, TOLD US JANUARY 16 OF CONVERSATIONS WHICH HE HAD HAD WITH TITOV, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS. SCHNEIER CHARACTERIZED HIS CONVERSATIONS AS BEING MARKED BY A MUCH MORE CONSTRUCTIVE AND RELAXED ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF THE SOVIET SIDE THAN HAD BEEN THE CASE IN THE PAST WITH TITOV'S PREDECESSORS. SCHNEIER FELT THAT HIS SOVIET CONTACTS HAD A REAL DESIRE TO HELP RESOLVE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS PRESENTLY EXISTING BETWEEN AMERICAN JEWRY AND THE SOVIET RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES. SCHNEIER HOPED THAT THIS EVIDENCE OF IMPROVEMENT WOULD CONTINUE. HE THOUGH THAT IT MIGHT HAVE SOME CONCRETE RESULTS.

2. SCHNEIER NOTED TWO SPECIFIC AREAS IN WHICH, AS A RESULT OF HIS CONVERSATIONS, IT SEEMED LIKELY THAT THERE MIGHT SOON BE IMPROVEMENTS. ASKED ABOUT AN APPEAL BY AMERICAN JEWS THAT A HASIDIC CEMETERY IN MUKACHEVO (TRANS CARPATHIA) NOT BE DESTROYED (75 MOSCOW A-446), TITOV, IN SCHNEIER'S PRESENCE, CALLED AN ASSISTANT, TOLD HIM THAT THE CEMETERY HAD TO BE PRESERVED AND GAVE
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SCHNEIER HIS ASSURANCE THAT THIS WOULD BE THE CASE.

3. IN ANOTHER AREA, TRAINING OF RABBIS FOR THE SOVIET JEWISH COMMUNITY, SCHNEIER SAID THAT HE HAD RAISED WITH TITOV THE POSSIBILITY OF SENDING A SMALL NUMBER OF JEWISH THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS TO THE U.S. TO STUDY -- ALONG THE LINES OF THOSE ENGAGED IN RABBINICAL STUDY IN BUDAPEST. TITOV SAID THAT HE SAW NO PROBLEMS IN PRINCIPLE, BUT THAT THERE MIGHT BE A FOREIGN EXCHANGE PROBLEM. SCHNEIER REPORTEDLY ASSURED TITOV THAT THE APPEAL OF CONSCIENCE FOUNDATION WOULD PROVIDE THE NECESSARY RESOURCES, WHEREUPON TITOV SAID THAT IN THAT CASE SUCH A PROGRAM SHOULD BE POSSIBLE. SCHNEIER SAID THAT HE INTENDED TO PURSUE THIS MATTER ON HIS RETURN TO THE U.S.

STOESSEL

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Message Attributes

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